

## MAKES MOVE TOWARD GIVING MILLIONS IN GAS COIN BACK TO CHICAGO USERS

Att'y Donald Richberg sees a \$10,000,000 rebate to the people of Chicago by the gas company. He told the special aldermanic committee on gas litigation this morning of the great victory the city had won in getting the gas case out of Judge Gibbons' court and was instructed by them to push the case with all possible speed. The \$10,000,000 is overcharges.

This afternoon he will file an appearance before Judge Smith and tomorrow will appear to ask to have Judge Gibbons' order which sent the case to master in chancery vacated. If this is done it will nullify the report of the master in chancery upon which Judge Gibbons denied the city the right of impounding the \$10,000,000 alleged overcharge and the opening the companies' books for investigation.

The committee also decided to ask the officials of the gas company to appear before them tomorrow morning to explain the references made by them in a letter to the council in which they asked to have the suit stopped so that new rates could be made.

A request for \$180,000 appropriation in the new budget to press the suit and to make the investigation, if it were allowed, was granted by the committee.

"The city is in no place to make new rates," Richberg said. "You should first have information on how the gas company has been operated for the past five years.

"The whole effort of the city should be directed to open the books of the company. When you have the information these books contain then is the time you should make new rates. A corps of engineers and accountants should be ready to do this work. I don't see why we cannot get this information, and after several

months work on this problem I think we will be successful in the end in getting the \$10,000,000 refund. The overcharges to the city itself will more than pay the expenses of this litigation and, besides, permanently reduce the rates to the people."

Yesterday a committee of judges, consisting of Jesse Baldwin, Chas. Walker and Frederick Smith, took the case away from Judge Gibbons "because the administration of the business of the court deemed it advisable."

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## WILSON PREPAREDNESS PLAN MEETS STRONG OPPOSITION

Washington, Jan. 5.—Unless materially modified, President Wilson's preparedness plan is beaten. This is the opinion, authoritatively learned today, of the administration itself.

Defection of Senator Kern, senate Democratic leader, from the forces working for the great army and navy program outlined by the president in his message to congress was the final proof to the White House that its plans will not carry. Kern's decision that he cannot support the program became known today. That the people of Indiana are opposed is Kern's chief reason, it is said.

This leaves the preparedness program unsupported by the leaders in both houses. Kitchin, house majority leader, has held off from the first, but Kern, warm Wilson admirer, has been expected to lead the administration's senate fight.

The wave of sentiment for a great preparedness program, which a few weeks ago was sweeping the country, has reached its crest, some administration leaders think. Today President Wilson is receiving many discouraging reports. The opposition centers upon Sec'y Garrison's army plan. The people "back home" don't like it, many congressmen report.

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Mrs. Edw. M. Colwin, 5940 Sheridan rd., has given \$1,000 to Rock River Methodist church endowment.